

Just before midnight last night, Lee Nobuo Anzai, a 29-year old teacher at Leilehua High School was arrested after he sold approximately 4 ounces of methamphetamine to an undercover officer while in the parking lot of Pali Longs and Safeway.

This arrest was the culmination of an undercover investigation into Mr. Anzai during the last two months. During this investigation, Mr. Anzai had sold a total of about 15 ounces of meth to the investigator on five different occasions. 15 ounces of meth is just under one pound of this deadly drug.

What is troubling about this case is that during some of these instances, Mr. Anzai would negotiate to do the drug deal during school hours and while either sitting in his classroom or on the school campus.

As a teacher, Mr. Anzai holds a position of trust. — he was suppose to be a positive mentor to our children — and, a person who the community relied upon, and entrusted their children to during school hours.

By intentionally selling a substantial amount of illegal drugs without caring about its effects on our community, and how his conduct might negatively affect our families, our children, and the school, — Mr. Anzai have violated our public trust in him.

Thus, Mr. Anzai has now been charged in Federal Court with 5 counts of distributing Methamphetamine or ICE.

If convicted of Counts One or Two — which charges him with selling more than 5 grams of Meth, he will face a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years in prison and up to 20 years in jail.

If convicted of Counts Three, Four or Five — which charges him with selling more than 50 grams of Meth, he will face a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and up to life imprisonment.

Mr. Anzai will have his initial appearance in Federal Court at 3:15 pm, this afternoon before Magistrate Judge Barry Kurren. He is currently being represented by Mr. Howard Luke.

These are serious charges, and we intend to continue sending the message that if you distribute this poison in our communities, you will be caught and you will see yourself in a Federal Penitentiary on the mainland serving a lengthy prison term. There is absolutely no excuse for this type of conduct and we will do all that we can to protect our citizens from this drug.

This case was investigated by the Hawaii Rapid Reduction Task Force, which is comprised of Honolulu Police Officers, State Sheriffs from the Department of Public Safety, and agents from the DEA, the FBI and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The U.S. Marshal Service and the Hawaii Fugitive Task Force also assisted in this investigation. And, I would like to thank each of these agencies for their tremendous contribution to this important program.

I would also like to thank Lt. Governor Duke Aiona for his support of this program. When we first started this program, we needed the support and partnership from our state agencies and he stepped to the table — committing the resources of our State Sheriffs to this important cause. Thank you Lt. Governor, for your support and backing of this program.

This Task Force was created in February of this year in order to address the concerns and complaints made by citizens in our communities. As you know, the focus of federal investigations have always been to go after the higher level of drug distribution — attacking it with federal wiretaps and prosecuting leaders, managers, and organizers of criminal groups that import drugs into our state. And, although these complex cases take time to fully investigate, we have been very effective in this effort.

However, we are also concerned about middle to lower level drug distribution which happens everyday in our streets, near our playgrounds, and in our communities. These are the crimes which our citizens see happening near their homes, and these are the crimes which affect quality of life for our families because it is directly related to the occurrence of burglaries, auto thefts, robberies, and identity thefts in our neighborhoods. Thus, these are crimes which must be addressed as well.

I applaud the Honolulu Police Department's establishment of the citizens' complaint line because it gives the public a number to call in order to report drug dealing or drug houses in their neighborhoods. That number again is 529-3101. The public can also report suspicious activities occurring in their neighborhoods on HPD's website.

Each year HPD receives approximately 1,200 calls from our citizens and they do their best to address these complaints as best they can.

I continue to urge the public to call in to report suspicious activities in your neighborhood, because it does make a difference. This Rapid Reduction Task Force was formed in order to review those complaints from our communities and to match it up to intelligence that we currently have.

The mission of this Task Force is to then quickly and aggressively investigate and arrest any mid to low level neighborhood drug dealing in hopes of working our way into the prosecution of drug organizations above them. But, in dealing with these crimes, I believe we are going to have a positive impact in the quality of life in our communities.

Since its creation, the Task Force has made a such an impact, and the arrest of Mr. Anzai last night is just one example of how it will make our communities safer from drug dealers.